

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I'm writing to urge you to support the proposed merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics. I believe the merger holds tremendous potential for my company in Johnson City, TX which sells EchoStar's DISH Network satellite TV service. The new company will offer a more attractive product to consumers, and this will mean more business for my company.

I can offer local broadcast channels to all of my customers when they subscribe to the DISH Network. This is not the case for retailers in medium and small-sized markets. Currently, EchoStar offers local broadcast service in only 36 television markets. The merger will allow the new company to end the duplication of programming and free up hundreds of channels allowing consumers in all 210 television markets across the country to receive their local broadcast channels. As a DISH Network retailer, I am very excited by this development because satellite TV will be perceived nationally as real alternative to cable.

Today's fledgling satellite Internet services are too expensive for everyday customers, leaving cable and DSL providers in control of the broadband market. The new company will have the spectrum and satellite resources necessary to provide consumers across the country with a competitive high-speed Internet alternative, and my customers will have more choice in broadband providers.

This merger will increase satellite TV's ability to respond competitively to the roll out of digital cable, forcing cable companies to respond in a variety of ways including accelerating their digital upgrades and extending their wires out to reach those customers they currently do not serve. The resulting expansion in digital capabilities across the board will increase competition generally, will drive hardware upgrades for consumers, and drive retail traffic and sales nationwide.

Since its inception, direct broadcast satellite TV providers have offered uniform, nationwide pricing structures, and the new company has guaranteed that it will continue this practice. Nationwide pricing offers customers in rural America the full benefits of the rigorous competition occurring in urban and suburban areas. I can rest assured that satellite TV will remain a competitively priced product.

Please support the merger between EchoStar Communications Corporation and Hughes Electronics. There are many benefits of the merger, but I believe that most importantly, the new company will increase competition with cable and help hold down cable rate increases. These savings, in turn, will be passed along to customers, which will be good for my business.

Sincerely,

Jason Hohenberger
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Johnson City, TX 78636